



Violations can result in discipline

Notaries are subject to disciplinary action for violations of notary laws, according to Secretary of State John Gale.

Upon receiving a complaint about a notary, our office sends the notary a letter detailing the allegations and requests a response. After the response is received, our office reviews the documents and information provided by the complainant and notary. If it is determined that malfeasance in office occurred, the notary can be disciplined.

Here are some recent examples of notary violations and the resulting penalties:

■A staff member of the notary forged the notary's signature and used their seal to notarize a document with permission from the notary. This resulted in the loss of the notary's commission.

■A notary backdated a document before notarizing it. This action resulted in a six-month suspension of the notary's commission.

■A notary failed to use proper acknowledgement language and was admonished.

■A notary attempted to use their commission to make frivolous documents appear legitimate. The notary was told to cease and desist from notarizing similar documents or face loss of commission.

Maintaining a notary journal is one of the easiest ways to discredit an unfounded complaint.



Make sure certificate has adequate space

A notary's seal is to be placed legibly near the notary's signature without obscuring any text or signatures.

What should you do if there is not enough room to put your notary certificate or seal on the actual document you are notarizing?

You should attach an additional page to the document that contains the full notarial certificate, which is the language that identifies the steps the notary has performed in witnessing or acknowledging a signature. You should also include the title of the document you are notarizing.

Below is an example.

State of Nebraska	
County of _____	
This instrument entitled _____	
Title of document being acknowledged	
was acknowledged before me on _____	
Date	
by _____	
Name of Person	
(Seal)	Signature of Notary

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